

Aotearoa Youth Network



**THE NGAKAWAU DAM
HAS BEEN STOPPED -
BY PEOPLE POWER.
THIS IS A HUGE
VICTORY FOR THE
PEOPLE OF
AOTEAROA. LET US
KEEP THE MOVEMENT
STRONG AND
GROWING BY
BUILDING BRIDGES
TO EACH OTHER, AND
BY MAKING EACH
OTHER STRONG.**

POLICE BRUTALITY AND OTHER STORIES

If you were around Christchurch at the time of the infamous Surge Dance Party on the 18th, you'll probably be wondering about what happened and why.

Why if the police knew that the building was a so called fire risk didn't they close the party down before this, or stop it going ahead at all? And what kind of a fire risk is a brick building with large roller doors and side entrances? And how can they justify their violent aggressive and provocative behaviour whilst claiming to be "using restraint" to stop the

"endangering" of "the lives of the public"? Do the "lives of the public" not include those who they were beating up, dragging along the ground and abusing? Would their reaction have been the same if the gathering at St Asaph street was a church meeting or an assembly of the National Party? Is it a conspiracy to close down alternative venues in the city?

Here's what happened...

On Saturday 17 July there was a 'disturbance' on St Asaph street when police entered the Surge indie dance party and closed it down. The police were both verbally and physically violent towards the people present, most of whom reacted passively and sat down outside in the street.

The whole thing began when

police arrived at about 1am, telling the organisers to evacuate the place - "it was a fire risk"; previously the fire department had come and said they would have to close it down because of inadequately lit fire exits (but they left and didn't come back for about an hour).

The band playing at that time, Pumpkinhead, stopped and said everyone had to leave, so people began filing out, a bit pissed off because it was finishing early and only a few bands had played, but peacefully. The police originally gave the organisers ten minutes to evacuate 450 people; but didn't even give them that - they entered the building and began trying to push people out faster.



POLICE CLEAR ST. ASAPH STREET

Two of the organising people went to the stage (this was deemed ok by the police), where Mike saw a policeman pushing someone around and asked a nearby camera-carrying person if they would film this. The police officer hearing this, told him to turn it off, and pushed Mike, calling him a troublemaker, and tried to throw him to the floor. When

he asked if he was being arrested, the officer said no, then other police joined him, putting him in a headlock, twisting his arms behind his back, punching him in the kidneys, and eventually kicking him to the floor.

Though he repeatedly yelled that he was not fighting them, they continued to beat him up, then arrested him. At this point, others had run over to try and see what was going on, asking the police to leave him alone - they were neither attacked by the police or arrested. Those arrested had no notification of why they were being arrested; and the police were aggressive and verbally offensive. A policewoman attacked one of the organisers - elbowing her in the throat, abusing her and later dragging her down the corridor; this was the same officer seen



PROTEST OUTSIDE THE COURT IN SUPPORT OF THOSE ARRESTED

on the news throwing another woman to the ground.

Some of the more intellectual comments from the police at this time included "fuck off or you'll be arrested" .. "sod off..bloody idiot" "provoke me, provoke me and see what happens" and "you're not bulletproof" - the latter being said by Sergeant Rivers who later laughed at the women he said this to when she got arrested.

The arrests and violence towards the people inside instigated the protest outside on St. Asaph street, where people sat down and linked arms. The police blocked the exits to St Asaph street with a van (and later cars) at one end and officers at the other; and after milling around indecisively for a while decided to "disperse" the crowd. Before thus people

had been standing up and continually reminid the crowd to remain peaceful and calm - that the police were the aggressors, not the people. The arrest of one person by three officers who jumped on him and dragged him off sparked random and discriminatory arrests and acts of violence.

The police began surrounding the protestors and arresting people; and 'removing the crowd' - picking people up, dragging and pushing them to the sides of the road. People remained unaggressive, wondering what was going on.

Then the police began to try to clear the area by charging the crowd, pushing, prodding and shouting. They pushed people down Colombo st and into the Square, using dogs. Several people got bitten, and others were subject to police

harrassment as they were pushed to the square.

31 people were arrested, 20 later being released without charge. When they arrived in jail, several people were stripsearched humiliatingly; and most were detained for several hours.

People trying to see those in jail, or to find out what was going on were threatened by the police - they were told that if they disturbed the police or made any noise, they themselves would be locked up, or their actions would cause those already inside to be kept there for longer.

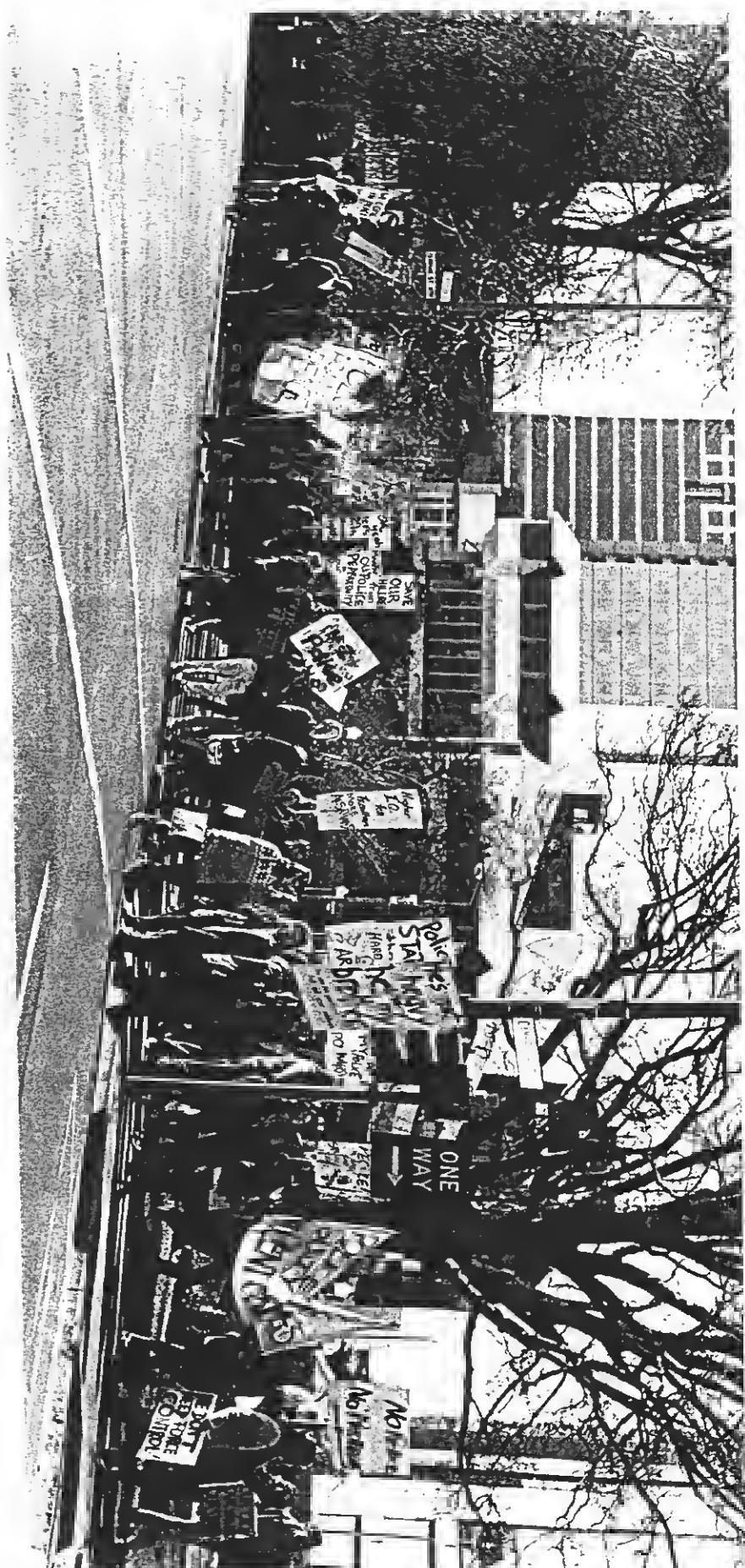
— Cathy Blakely

Definition of a Riot: Peaceful protest that comes under Police control.

On July the 18th at about 1.30 am the Police broke up the Surge Dance Party in Christchurch. While the police were within their legal rights to do this - the number of people gathered inside the St. Asaph st. warehouse constituted an official fire risk - the often aggressive and sometimes openly violent methods that they used to disperse party goers remaining in the street were both reprehensible and legally dubious. As the police cleared out the peaceful gatherers people were pushed, abused, dragged and beaten.

In our minds the way the police handles this incident raises two

PROTEST MARCH AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY



very important issues:

1. Police procedure is vastly lacking in how to deal with crowd situations. The police should use methods appropriate to the given situation; they should not use violent measures to coerce or disperse a peaceful crowd. 2. The way the police handled this incident is symptomatic of the way in which police frequently deal with anyone who is not white or belonging to the middle or upper class.

For those of us who do not conform to society's mainstream or are part of minority groups we are bombarded with an unavoidable reminder of how society works in oppressive and degrading ways. For many this

is repeatedly expressed in the often disrespectful and abusive treatment received from a predominantly white male and middle class police force.

Society contains a diverse mix of individuals, because someone is excluded from or does not choose to conform to the standards of the majority should not qualify them for unjust treatment. As individuals we are all equal human beings with valid thoughts and feelings who neither deserve nor desire to suppress who we are. Because we belong to a particular minority group, or merely because we are poor, young, or unemployed this does mean that we should be singled out as victims.

As members of this society we

believe that victimisation in all forms is unacceptable. For this reason we wish to express our dissatisfaction with the manner in which the police frequently abuse the powers and privilege invested in them.

— Civil Rights Action Group, Christ-

PROTESTS AND MORE PROTESTS

In response to the actions taken by the police at St. Asaph street, a small group of concerned citizens began collecting complaints late the next day.

In support of those people who were appearing in court facing various charges, a demonst-



PROTESTERS OUTSIDE THE COURTHOUSE

raior was held outside the Christchurch District Court on Monday morning, attracting about 35 people. More complaints were received from those who attended the protest, and the first 17 complaints were forwarded to the Police Complaints Authority on Tuesday.

Following a statement made in the "Press" on Tuesday by the Policeman in charge of the weekend operation, Inspector J Rivers, that if Police credibility was an issue he was ready to deliberate at any time, a public meeting was organised for Wednesday night. A second picket was held at the court on Wednesday morning with about 30 people present. One person appearing in court on

Wednesday morning applied for "diversion" but was informed by the Police prosecutor at the court that none of those arrested on Sunday morning would be eligible for diversion.

In a meeting with acting District commander Dalziel later on Wednesday, a representative of the protesters was told that diversion would be available to all those who qualified as:

"one of them might want to be a lawyer one day"

The representative was also told that Inspector Rivers would be unable to attend a public meeting as he was now under investigation. The meeting went ahead that night,

but the Police declined to send any representatives, saying that a public meeting would "turn into a debacle".

Still, in excess of 140 people were present to discuss the events of the night and share information about how to lay complaints. On Friday morning a third protest was held outside the District Court. This time over 150 people turned up and held a highly visible picket for over 2 hours. Inside a law student appearing on a minor

None of those 4 were arrested.

On Monday, a week after the first protests, acting DC Dalziel told a representative of the protesters that the Police Prosecutor had been replaced and that each application for diversion would now be treated on its own merits. Dalziel went on to say that a private meeting between Police and complaints would have to be postponed a further 2 weeks until all complaints had been assessed. The Police have apparently had to use extra staff to process all the complaints.

The issue that protesters feel is uppermost in the ongoing debate with Police regards not why the party was closed down but rather the methods employed by the Police throughout the course of the

night. They appeared unable to cope with a peaceful sitdown protest and eventually brought in dog teams which instead of bringing the situation under control, caused wide scale confusion and resentment, especially as the dogs were attacking people who were not behaving aggressively.

A legal defence fund has been established, and a fund raising concert is to be held in August featuring "Pumpkinhead" and "Trawler". Further protest action is also planned.

■ David Lines and Richard Arachnid.

For more information on the Dance Party events and protest actions, write to ARM at PO Box 22-301, High St.

When poor people take things, it's called looting. When rich people take things, it's called profits.



charge was declined diversion.

After protesting outside the court, the picket moved down to the Christchurch Central Police Station, where some protesters went into reception to lay complaints. Initially they were turned away but eventually police accepted a further 23 written complaints. After an hour at the Police station the group marched through the central city to the Square then back to the court where they dispersed peacefully.

9 people were still facing charges, including disorderly conduct, obstruction, assaulting a police officer and escaping from custody. 4 people who received dog bites on the night have yet to lay complaints.

BUILDING OUR OWN FUTURE

AN INVITATION TO BE INVOLVED

Most people left the Peace, Power and Politics Conference with a new enthusiasm and commitment to be involved in issues of social justice at a local, national and international level.

For many of us the question becomes, what can we do in our local communities to continue the spirit of Peace, Power and Politics? What can we do that is perhaps different to the activities that we have been involved in previously?

Some of us who attended the PPP gathering are now working on a project called Building Our Own Future, the first phase of which is the holding of Peoples Assemblies in local communities throughout the country.

We would like to invite you to join our project by assisting us organise a Peoples Assembly in your city or town.

WHY PEOPLES ASSEMBLIES?

We believe that over the last two decades the Government / State / Crown has lost its legitimacy and even its right to claim governance over those people which it has consciously marginalised. It has done this by locking many of them out of the productive processes of society through its unemployment policies, devaluing the wages of tens of thousands of already low paid workers, reducing benefits below the level required for a decent life, and dismantling the publicly funded and provided education, health and housing systems and the other components of the welfare state.

This legitimacy has been questioned by Maori, the tangata whenua of this country for more than 150 years as the Crown assumed rights and powers that were never ceded to it under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Now that legitimacy is being questioned by those of all races who find they have been given no part to play in the society created by successive governments of the elite of this settler colony called New Zealand.

The Peoples Assemblies project will begin during the lead up to the 1993 General Election. The project will make use of the heightened political awareness of people at this time but will not address itself directly to the elections. Rather it will tap into peoples cynicism and anger at the whole electoral process and system of governance that we have, a concern that is much deeper than simply questions of an MMP vs FPP electoral system. It will contrast this "low intensity (three-minutes-every-three-years) democracy" with the concept of peoples governance or peoples sovereignty. That is people doing it for themselves - not in an individualistic way but in a caring, collective, cooperative way.

CONCEPT

The concept of the project is to creatively use "alternative governance" philosophy and symbols as a way of bringing people together to tell their own stories of oppression and marginalisation, to hear of positive alternatives that have started from peoples own coping mechanisms, to look at practical ways that such alternatives can be built and strengthened and to work out how the building of alternatives can challenge our current system of mis-government rather than being co-opted by it.

The aim is to build on the activities of last year's Peoples Select Committee, the philosophy of the Christchurch based Campaign for Peoples Sovereignty, the inspiration from Peace, Power and Politics along with the practical examples of the Auckland and Wellington Peoples Centres and other national and local action groups as examples of alternatives in action.

ACTIVITIES

From September until November it is proposed to hold a series of Peoples Assemblies in at least 15 locations throughout the country.

A draft Peoples Charter will be taken for discussion to the Peoples Assemblies. The Charter will not be a wish list of what we want from a Government but will be setting a peoples agenda of what is needed to meet the needs of the people and what we ourselves are going to do about it.

It is proposed to hold a National Peoples Congress in February 1994, a week before the parliament of the mis-rulers is due to open. Such a Congress would synthesise the reports from the local assemblies, adopt the Peoples Charter, plan ongoing work for the movement that has been created through the project, draft and place a Peoples Agenda before the incoming government of the elite. It will also present its charter and agenda to the bodies or structures holding Maori Sovereignty or Tino Rangatiratanga.

It is hoped that the Peoples Congress will establish a panel of spokespeople with various portfolios to act as a "peoples shadow cabinet", a voice of the people on an ongoing basis.

We urge you to become part of this movement by first of all helping to organise a Peoples Assembly in your town or city. If you can help please contact us at the address at the bottom of this page.

THE BUILDING OUR OWN FUTURE PROJECT ... A BACKGROUND

Building Our Own Future is an autonomous project sponsored by the Conference of Churches of Aotearoa - New Zealand (CCANZ) from a "PAC" grant from the Methodist Church. Its purpose is to "bring together people who are willing to talk and act with others towards different economic and political structures".

It was felt that for such gatherings to be successful they must be organised in a creative way which empowers and gives energy to the participants as well as challenging those structures of society that oppress the poor. The Peoples Assemblies are an attempt to do just that.

If you wish to be involved or require further information on the Peoples Assemblies or any other part of the Building Our Own Future Project please write to 54 Manson Street, Palmerston North. Tel / Fax 06-357 0617.

OTAGO UNIVERSITY REGISTRY UNDER SIEGE

The Education Campaign in Dunedin took a major leap forward on Tuesday August 3 when hundreds of angry students occupied the University Registry building in a protest against fee increases.. The Registry had not been occupied by protesting Students since 1971.

About 30 vocal Students bearing placards were present during the meeting which

raised Student fees while the Council room reverberated with the chanting of students in the corridors.

The Council not only passes a motion increasing fees, but also passed a motion preventing reconsideration of that decision. The only concession made by the Council was to agree to participate in an open forum on the fees issue.

After making it's decision (supported by all Council members except the 2 Students delegates) the meeting was abandoned. Angry students blocked the entrances, preventing the Councillors from leaving for 45 minutes.

The protest, organised by the Education Action Group, was a success in that the occupation was sustained for a period of 3 hours. As hoped, it also succeeded in demonstrating to many students that the Chancellor and University administration, far from acting in the best interests of Students, actually adopt and implement blatantly anti-student policies.

Tuesday's protest was the culmination of a busy week for the EAG and other activists on campus. Several students undertook a 7 day hunger strike, refusing all solid food, to highlight the plight of many students and to protest against the fee increase. During the



STUDENTS BLOCK REGISTRY EXITS - THE POLICE GIVE UP TRYING TO CLEAR A PATH AFTER THROWING ONE STUDENT OVER THE RAILING.

week a tent was set up on campus and the hunger strikers and activists "camped out" at varsity. A petition was circulated asking the University not to increase fees and attracted over 2500 signatures.

The anger expressed at the Registry siege is a sign that students are no longer prepared to lay down and allow themselves to be stomped on by a University and a Government apparently united in an attempt to introduce user pays and create elitism in Tertiary Education.

Organisers are confident that the education campaign is breaking down the old problem of apathy and will continue to grow in strength. The war against fees will not be easily won, but there is a new optimism amongst student activists that the campaign will eventually result in success.

■ Anita Waters

FEES AGAIN

Since the Registry siege, protests against the fee increases have continued. At a Student General Meeting, a motion of no confidence was passed in Judith Medlicott, the University Chancellor.

STUDENTS OCCUPYING THE REGISTRY CORRIDORS



The motion called on her to resign. Another motion also called on the Students Association to protest against the Labour Party's new education policy, as it will actually increase fees for most Students.

Pete Hodgson, the Labour for Dunedin North, where many Students live, criticised the Registry protest, saying that the Government was avoiding

blame. But this missed the point - that the Registry actually agrees with User Pays, and that it does have money to absorb the cuts.

A couple of nights after the protest, someone burnt a large NO FEES message on the grass outside the Registry. The University has agreed to have an open forum with the Students. Protests will continue in the third term.

■ Joss Debreceny

Reflections on the Election

DETERMINING OUR FUTURE?

By Jane Kelsey

Women's suffrage year presents some of us with a dilemma. We want to celebrate the achievements of, and learn of lessons from, those women who have gone before us - the strength which carried them through hard times, and the sisterhood which bound them together with a sense of mutual responsibility. At the same time we shouldn't get too carried away. We need to look in a hard-headed way at how much further ahead we are in determining our future as women of Aotearoa, Maori and Tauwi, today.

The events of the past decade have produced in many of us a deep disillusionment and anger. Many Maori feel betrayed by yet more broken promises, and victimised by an economic and political system built on their oppression and stolen resources. Many Pakeha feel that successive governments have sold out democracy and sold off their country to big business. The legitimacy of government is under attack from both sides. There is room for alliances, and dangers of bitter conflict.

Crisis of Legitimacy

The crisis of legitimacy facing government is no accident. Inflicting all that pain - the high interest rates, the factory closures, the unemployment, the rundown of schools and hospitals, the market rentals, the benefit cuts, the poor-card, the search for scapegoats, the poverty - has involved unpopular decisions. These would never have been inflicted on us if governments felt they needed to carry the support of the people. But the system of formal electoral democracy, where accountability only comes once every three years, and where both major parties are committed to the same agenda, posed no real obstacles.

For all the talk about increasing our freedom of choice, we were given none. What we got instead was the broken election promises, the elitist politics of arrogant politicians, the officials who appeared to be running the show, the farce of parliamentary process, and the moves to sideline or silence any of the official watchdogs who dared voice their dissent. Power over crucial economic, social, political and constitutional decisions was transferred to international capital and placed well beyond the reach of formal democracy.

Democratic participation

Such anti-democratic practices were necessary to set the reforms firmly in place and make them virtually irreversible. But they are not likely to last forever. Once power over resources and decision-making has been privatised, democratic participation may be reinstated. The rules governing elections and accountability of governments might even be strengthened to rebuild confidence, provide stability and defuse discontent. This could produce a more representative and accountable government. But so long as democratic rights are formal only, it will be a government which exercises power over very little.

That is what happened in post-Pinochet Chile. The

to elected government after a decade of military repression and radical free market reforms. But the economic policies, and power of international capital and the wealthy elites, remained the same. So did the plight of their victims - the Mapuche who remained landless, powerless, and victimised in their own land; the mothers who struggled to raise their children in conditions of abject poverty; the women and men who worked for a pittance under laws which mirror our Employment Contracts Act, and whose employers were transnational corporations, including 'our own', who eagerly grasped Pinochet's offer of cheap labour and resources and special incentives to invest.

The situation we face in Aotearoa is the same. The electoral reform referendum is a side-show. Even if MMP wins majority support this year, it will not come on stream until the next election. In another three years a government could complete the restructuring programme and entrench the reforms of the past decade. All it really needs to do is remain on course, perhaps making the odd pragmatic concession but leaving 'the essentials' in place.

That could come from Labour or National. It is no accident that Labour has focused on the populist issue of health reform. The concerns they raise apply equally to the other areas which both Labour and National have 'restructured' over the past decade. There is nothing about rectifying the damage of the past, only glossy visions of the future. While the Alliance has addressed many of these issues, its backward-looking solutions lack the necessary innovation and credibility to provide a convincing alternative.

The answers to our dilemma lie beyond the sphere of parliamentary politics. We need to find new forms of decision-making which ensure that Maori and Tauwi can genuinely take control of the decisions which affect our lives, in the ways which reflect the constitutional foundations set out in the Treaty. But we also need to face up to the international nature of the world in which we live. The power and relevance of the nation state is in decline. We need urgently to work out the terms on which we want to interact with other peoples, nations, movements, corporations and international agencies.

This means mobilising people's movements at the local, national and international level. Despite the enormity of the task, there are things we can do whoever we are and whatever our skills.

At the local level we can work to delay what remains of the privatisation programme, take popular control of what is left, and develop alternative models of participatory economic development.

At the national level we can exploit the tensions which political parties still face between carrying the restructuring programme through, and appearing to be committed to democracy. And we can identify and insist on alternative economic and governmental strategies, based on participation, self-determination and social justice, which meet the real needs of the people as identified by us.

At the international level we can employ the politics of embarrassment, and exploit threat of disorder to deter potential investors. We can also share our experiences with other peoples facing the early stages of similar 'structural adjustment programmes' imposed by agencies like the World Bank - often advised by the likes of Roger Douglas and Graham Scott (former head of the Treasury).

Until now the direction has been dictated by the interests of transnational capital and the economic superpowers. To challenge their power will be costly. The question is whether that cost will be greater than continuing down the present path. But to answer that we need to have the information, explore the options, and make the de-

Corso Overview August 1993.

International News - Lebanon

US Secretary of State William Christophers vist to the Middle East this week has proved to be a restraining influence on Israel's attacks on Lebanon.

Israel has refrained from their bombardment of Lebanese targets during William Christophers visit but it seems likely hat the attacks will continue on his departure. The US has done nothing to encourage Israel to cease their attacks on Lebanon despite the numerous violations of International Law committed by Israel on another sovereign state.

The US silence on Israel's invasion on Lebanon has only recently begun to recover from a 15 year civil war and the developing unity within the country and co-operative relationship with Syria is clearly counter to Israels's interests in the region. The Lebanese Civilil war enabled Israel to take advantage of the chaos by occupying territory in Southern Lebanon, the civil war also succeeded in occupying Syria's attention in Lebanon.

Events of the last week only go to reinforce the impression that peace is clearly not in Israel's interest. Hizbollah guerilla activity was orn oujt of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, that activity is now being inflamed by Israel thereby allowing them to continue military activity in the region and avoid having to enter peaceful dialouge with the Palestinians in the other

territory occupied by Israel.

As the West stands by and allows Israel to violate the sovereignty of Lebanon hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians are being dispossessed of their homes, whole villages are being wiped off the face of the earth and hundreds of people are being killed.

■ **AI McClymont**

Bolshevik Club Debates Censor- ship.

The Bolshevik club was recently involved in the Victoria University Women's Festival. A BC speaker featured in one of the highlights of the festival - a debate on the Films, Videos and Publications Bill which is before parliament at the moment. This legislation is designed to toughen up the law regarding the availability of pornography. This will supposedly improve the position of women in society.

In our view the new law will have the opposite effect. It will allow the Ministers of Social Welfare, Internal affairs, and Justice to appoint the censor. Who are these people?

Jenny Shipley talks about celibacy and the sanctity of marriage, while attacking the living standards of women on social welfare benefits. Graham Lee is a puritanical Christian with definite and very reactionary ideas on what is acceptable morality - he was central to the opposition to homosexual law reform and continues his verbal gay

bashing today. Doug Graham has of course recently shown his sensitivity about women's rights around the issue of rape rights.

Nope of those people is a defender of women's rights - but it is their appointee who will decide what are "objectionable" expressions of sexuality and what's ok. What can have no illusions that ministers of the patriarchal state will use the power to censor to improve women's rights.

The new law will also give further intrusive powers to the police. They will be able to search a house or workplace and seize ANY MATERIAL they like under the pretext that it may be objectionable pornography. It requires no great imagination to think how these powers could be used against "enemies of the state".

A strike leader has her house ransacked and not only her personal lesbian literature but all the strike committees are taken. The members of an organising committee fighting for gay rights are raided and phone lists are removed along with their gay porn.

The Bolshevik Club argued to this effect in the women's festival debate and received a favourable response from many of those present. We would like to call upon the readers of the AYN newsletter to oppose the power of the state to control our lives and defend our democratic rights.

■ **In solidarity, Joss
Hannah for the
Bolshevik Club.**

PEACE POWER AND POLITICS CONFERENCE AND THE FIGHT AHEAD

I was a “green shirt” (organiser) at the PP&P conference and like Fiona Clayton (AYN newsletter no.1), I found the experience to be both interesting and exciting. I too was gratified by the number of people who participated and were politicised by the conference.

Conferences like PP&P (and the Socialist Students conference held in Wellington in May), are very important. It's rare for such a large and diverse group of activists to be assembled in one place to discuss crucial issues. This conference hopefully represents the start of a period of regroupment and renewal for the Left. As a communist (I'm a member of the Victoria University Bolshevik Club), I see this as being absolutely essential at this point. Unity in action, as called for by Fiona, is to certain extent the starting point for this renewal. But what is more important, and this is why the newsletter is important, is the need for discussion on the broadest possible scale. Debates, arguments, learning from others and from history and the clarification of ideas are all crucial for activists who know what their goals are, how to fight for these goals, and can see who their friends and enemies are.

The Bolshevik Club, a Marxist

organisation, wants to discuss Marxism with other people, learn from them and answer questions they might have about our politics. We want to unite with others around a revolutionary program, that is informed by the interconnectedness of all struggles, in order to destroy all oppression. This battle against oppression will require us to engage in frank exchanges of different and even conflicting views on how to fight the battle. The collision and combination of different ideas and perspective's is what keeps the movement alive and healthy. This process may not be too smooth which is why I go back to Fiona's call for unity in action. When there is a need for unity in action the Bolshevik Club advocates unity with others in what we call a “united front”.

An example of a united front the BC is involved in is “CHOICE”. CHOICE was formed to defend Wellington's Parkview clinic from “Operation Rescue” and the ‘Society for the protection of the unborn child’. Everyone involved wanted to stop SPUC's attempt to close the clinic by force. This single limited goal was sufficient basis for unity in action. The defence line was formed by people with a range of viewpoints and motivations, including communists, feminists, unionists and other women and men defending abortion rights.

Everyone involved in CHOICE has differing views on how to end women's oppression. Despite these divisions we still

defeated SPUC. During such a struggle the opportunity exists for discussion amongst people committed to social change. So we talk about why communists fight for reproductive choice, free 24 hour child care and the replacement of the oppressive nuclear family with the socialisation of domestic Labour.

The same applies to other struggles... education , health , housing jobs, and so on. We will unite with anyone who fights for better conditions. However we recognise that these problems cannot be solved by the Capitalism. Capitalism is defined by the ruthless exploitation of the vast majority by a tiny minority that is motivated solely by the pursuit of profit. We want to create a new society which provides for people's needs and is free of exploitation. Unfortunately for the bourgeoisie their capitalist system is in the way. We want to make a revolutionary change in the way society works. In order to understand just how we're going to do this we will need a dialogue embracing all the oppressed.

comradely
greetings, Andrew.
Victoria University
Students Association
Bolshevik Club.

LETTERS

Dear Guys!

Congratulations on the first newsletter! It looks great, and I can't tell you how pleased we are to see it. It is not only important to mobilise the youth of New Zealand to social, political and environmental change, but it is essential for the network to be kept together and informed.

My suggestion for the next step in networking is to make sure somehow that people in all areas can get in contact with each other, so that they have a local group that can easily be galvanised into action when the need occurs.

A couple of days ago in Wellington there was a "Youth Environmental Summit" which has been engineered by the Government and corporations such as Comalco and MacDonalds under the pretence of being concerned about the environment. It involved children from schools all over New Zealand taking part in discussion, and it used an acronym (YES) which is already used by an activist group in the States called Youth for Environmental Sanity.

There was a demonstration organised at short notice, and a fake Ronald Macdonald danced in a whole lot of Macdonald's rubbish which had been dumped on the Turnball House steps the press conference began. The result was a page 2 photo in the Evening Post the next day, showing the demonstrator getting his wig ripped off by an irate PR official(also page 3 in the Dominion).

I think that as a youth movement this is exactly the sort of thing that we should be doing, but on a national scale. Together we can change the world!

If there is any way in which we can help in terms of information reaching the rest of the peace movement, please don't hesitate to ask. For example, we would be happy to run an article on the genesis of the network for inclusion in the next magazine.

Good luck with it, and stay in touch.

■ Amy Rountree.

Greetings,

I'm a horticultural student from Massey, and was inspired to join AYN from a talk another student gave in one of my lectures. After spending 3 and a half years studying horticulture I've decided that I'm more interested in the Social Sciences so will probably change next year.

1993 has been a real awakening time for me in that for 20 odd years I've been walking around with my eyes closed. I basically know little about anything and am now thirsty for any knowledge on alternative economic systems to the one we have now, anything to do with indigenous peoples struggles around the world, environmental issues and anything to do with meditation. I help run the Meditation Society at Massey University and occasionally come across some little gems which I will send to you. I was impressed with your newsletter and think the networking idea is great. Basically, keep up the excellent work, I'm looking forward to some more interesting info.

■ Cheers, Mike.

Greetings,

Congratulations to those involved in the hunger strike. A week without food seems like a daunting prospect to me. Our biggest political action this year has been a rally outside the University Library, and that wasn't very large.

The Progressive Left has had its share of trials. We thought confining it to a discussion group would alleviate the problems of political differences. It has helped to do this but some have left because they see it as an empty talkshop. However the regular meetings to discuss political issues have helped members to improve their knowledge on issues. Our literature tables have also helped to give us a bit of a visible presence on campus.

A couple of other things are happening at Canterbury. One is the Campaign for Student Democracy. The CSD was formed to fight for a more democratic student union. Our demands are for regular Student Representative Council meetings, for these to be binding on the executive, and for SRC's to be able to recall

call for a no-confidence vote in the last Presidential election and this was well publicised. The calibre of Presidential candidates was low and other no-confidence campaigns were also run. These unfortunately tended to focus on personalities rather than politics and some were rather nasty. It is possible at Canterbury to vote for no-confidence in the entire proceedings rather than just individuals. No-confidence easily won with about 550 votes.

This victory and some negative campaigning have resulted in a right-wing attack on freedoms of speech at varsity. The following motion was added to our constitution at a general meeting:

No written information concerning the election shall be distributed in any other case without the knowledge and approval of the returning officer.

Any other case means every case and as we pointed out at the meeting this includes any articles or letters written in the Student paper. Unfortunately our motion to remove this clause was heavily defeated. One success at the meeting was that an attempt to abolish the Student Representative Council was squashed.

Our intention in the CSD is to make student referenda binding on the association and able to change the constitution. If we succeed we will be more able to appeal directly to the student body via referenda.

The other attempt on campus is the attempt to form a more militant education action group. The existing anti-fees, pro-allowances group is called campaign. Unfortunately it is run by one person, who refuses to accept any help or advice. As they were failing to build an effective movement, exec appointed a deputy, Jason Brice. The organiser refused to work with Jason, so he formed his own group called SCARFIE. Another PL member also wished to form yet another group. Some of us thought these should be unified so we have been arranging meetings to do so. Personally I am sceptical of the chances of a group like this getting underway in the third term and think that the start of next year may be a better time.

■ Yours fraternally, Adam



BUDGET ADVICE AWARENESS WEEK

September 27 to October 3 is Survival Week, the annual awareness week of Budget Advice. In the past these have informed poor people about the community services available to them. Increasingly however such services are unable to be of much benefit, because in order for one to budget there needs to be money to budget with.

The lack of money available is the direct result of the Governments actions. The decisions government makes shows a gross indifference to providing the basic needs of New Zealanders. This week we will be reminding Government that their decisions are forcing people to live in poverty. No matter how economical people are they are unable to avoid this state of privation.

There are people in this country who are stealing food out of rubbish skips; who have \$13 left to live on for the rest of the year; who can not afford basic materials which are essential but beyond their reach - because the government has deserted them.

Students and Young people are forced to compromise themselves by working full time on exploitative minimum wages, if they are lucky enough to find work. They are drowning in inconceivably large debts in the empty hope of finding jobs later.

The hand to mouth existence that most youth have to endure is not caused by irresponsibility or lack of care on our behalf. We do budget, but no matter how careful we are, there is no money to budget with.

The people of New Zealand are no longer going to accept the blame for a problem which is deeply rooted in governmental policies and attitudes. By telling us that we should be budgeting out meagre funds more carefully the government is managing to individualise fault and shirk all responsibility for a problem which is not created by those who suffer. It is time to make the government aware that we will no longer stand for such treatment. We want accountability. We want those responsible for the problem to accept responsibility. We want change.

— Anita Jowitt.

For more information about Budget Advice Survival Week, contact Anita Jowitt at the

Otago University Students Association, PO Box 56 Dunedin.

AYN CONTACTS

Dunedin - Cybele Locke, 17 Blacks Rd., phone 473-0684.

Wellington - Alistair Shaw, 20F Portland Crescent, phone 4711862.

Auckland - Victoria St. John, 2/31 Benson Rd., phone 520-2282.

If anyone is interested in getting involved in AYN - please do!!! Write to us at 111 Moray Place Dunedin with articles, letters, news or anything else, or get in touch with your local contacts. If you want to act as a local contact for AYN, drop us a line and we can give you more information about the network and plans for the future.

HELP!!!!!!

Please help us continue the work of the Aotearoa Youth Network. We rely only on donations and grants - and desperately need money to keep going. Currently our mailing list is at almost 300 young activists, and is always growing. It costs about \$1.50 for every newsletter, and it adds up quickly. We are cutting costs wherever we can, but do need your help. If you can, please send a donation to keep AYN going, and to keep our movements growing.

Aotearoa Youth Network

111 Moray Place

Dunedin

Corso